

**In the Claims**

Claims 1-28 are cancelled.

New claims 30-48 are entered.

Claim 29 has been amended as shown below. Underlines indicate insertions;  
~~strikeouts~~ indicate deletions.

1-28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently amended) A bone joining implant, comprising;

a tubular body having an open leading end and a central aperture, the central aperture similarly sized to the open leading end, the open leading end communicating with the central aperture and configured to entrap a living bone projection from each of a pair of adjacent bone bodies being joined together; and

a plurality of discrete retaining tabs provided on an outer surface of the tubular body, each tab configured relative to the outer surface of the tubular body without any inclination angle between the tab and a circumferential line about the outer surface, and configured to retain the implant between the pair of adjacent bone bodies.

30. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 29, wherein each of the retaining tabs has a sloped front face.

31. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 30, wherein each of the retaining tabs has a sharp rear edge.

32. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 29, wherein the retaining tabs are spaced apart about the outer surface of the tubular body in a non-helical array.

33. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 32, wherein the retaining tabs are spaced apart about the outer surface of the tubular body in a cylindrical array.

34. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 29, wherein each of the tabs is configured symmetrically about a longitudinal axis that is parallel with a central axis of the tubular body.

35. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 34, wherein the retaining tabs are provided about a trailing portion of the tubular body.

36. (New) A bone joining implant, comprising:  
a tubular body with an inner surface, an outer surface, and an open leading end communicating with the inner surface; and  
a dart having a sloped front face and a sharp rear edge, the dart extending from one of the inner surface and the outer surface.

37. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 36, wherein the dart extends from the outer surface.

38. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 37, wherein a plurality of the darts extend from the outer surface.

39. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 36, wherein the tubular body has a longitudinal axis lying in a longitudinal plane of the tubular body that bifurcates the dart, and the dart is configured symmetrically about the longitudinal plane.

40. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 39, wherein the sharp rear edge of the dart is configured without any pitch relative to a transverse, circumferential line about the outer surface of the tubular body with respect to the longitudinal axis of the tubular body.

41. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 40, wherein a plurality of the darts are provided spaced apart about an outer periphery of the tubular body.

42. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 41, wherein the plurality of darts are formed on a trailing portion of the tubular body.

43. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 36, wherein a plurality of the darts extend from the outer surface of the tubular body, and wherein the tubular body comprises a cylinder having an open trailing end communicating with the open leading end via the inner surface.

44. (New) The bone joining implant of claim 43, wherein the inner surface has a uniform transverse sectional configuration extending from the open leading end to the open trailing end.

45. (New) A vertebral implant, comprising:  
a tubular body with an inner surface and an outer surface; and  
a plurality of discrete beveled retaining tabs provided on the outer surface of the body, each tab having a sloped front face and a sharp rear edge extending from the outer surface of the body and configured without pitch relative to a circumferential line on the outer surface of the tubular body extending in a plane that is perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the tubular body.

46. (New) The vertebral implant of claim 45, wherein the plurality of tabs are configured in a non-helical array about the outer surface of the tubular body.

47. (New) The vertebral implant of claim 45, wherein the tabs are provided in a cylindrical array about the tubular body.

48. (New) The vertebral implant of claim 47, wherein the tabs are provided about a trailing portion of the tubular body.